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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003752

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PGOV PREL IZ

SUBJECT: A SHIFT OF POWER IN THE PM'S OFFICE

Classified By: POLCOUNS ROBERT FORD FOR REASONS

1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: There have been more shake-ups at the Prime Ministry. Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister Adnan Ali Al-Khadimi has unofficially usurped the role of the PM's Chief of Staff. Khadimi's consolidation of power has led to resentment among key PM staffers. His failure to prioritize and delegate has created a bottleneck delaying decision-making and implementation on several projects. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) The shift of power to Khadimi has been evident during recent high level visits, including that of the Jordanian PM (septel) and US congressional delegations. PM's Chief of Staff Abdul Aziz Al-Tamini has been absent or seated farthest from the PM, while Khadimi occupies the closest staff seat to the PM. Last week, with a forced smile, Al-Tamini told PolOff to consult with Adnan Ali on upcoming PM projects. Recently, Shi'a political figure Saad Saleh Jabr told PolOff that he and Khadimi are the only two PM advisors left. He then whispered that Adnan got rid of the rest.

13. (C) Conversations with key PM staffers indicate a growing resentment towards Khadimi's unwillingness to delegate. PM's Chief of Protocol Jassim Msawil griped to PolOff that he is not part of this year's PM UNGA delegation and has absolutely nothing to do with its planning. Msawil added that he is not even in control of filing visa applications and spouted, "Everything is in Adnan Ali's back pocket!" PM Spokesperson Laith Kubba is formally in charge of advancing the PM's upcoming trip to the US. On repeated occasions Kubba has told PolOff, that "all details rest with Adnan." Al-Khadimi designated Haidar Abadi to be the ITG POC on humanitarian assistance and reconstruction task forces regarding Tall'Afar, yet he continues to chair or co-chair all meetings. He also appears to have the PM's ear on how Ja'afari relates to President Talabani.

14. (C) COMMENT: Khadimi is an action-oriented staffer who is comfortable with Americans and seeks results. We see him everywhere now - from Tal Affar planning to the Saddam trial to the Jordanian PM visit. Planning on Tal Affar has been delayed at times because Khadimi insists on doing the scheduling himself. Details about the upcoming Ja'afari trip fell through cracks because Khadimi failed to delegate them to other PM staffers. Ultimately, Ja'afari is responsible for the leadership and organizational shortcomings of his team. The power shifts and in-house rivalries among his staff members would normally be of secondary importance to the fundamental question of the PM's effectiveness. Khadimi's management style -- by no means unique in the Iraqi context -- is a notable factor behind the problems of the PM's office. END COMMENT.

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